DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 315 695 CG 022 274

AUTHOR Barnard, Spencer
TITLE How To Engage the Parents of Your Students at Risk.
INSTITUTION Winnerscorp, Kankakee, IL.
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 25p.
PUB TYPE Guides - General (050)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Elementary School Students; Elementary Secondary Education; Intervention; *Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Education; Parent Participation; Parent Role; *Parent School Relationship; *Secondary School Students

ABSTRACT

Educators of students at risk need to engage the students' parents in the educational process. Many parents do not know how important they are to their children's success in school. Parents should be encouraged to spend time with their children; read to their children; discipline their children; and expect their children to succeed. Educators can engage parents by suggesting that parents provide structure; offering writing activities for the home; recommending that parents reward positive conduct; suggesting specific ideas for goals for the children; and preparing parents for the parent/teacher conference. Parents can help to build their children's confidence by learning about their children's strengths; complimenting their positive behavior; being patient; never ridiculing their children; and making them feel important to the family. Children can be taught good discipline by being given responsibilities in the home; being given encouragement; and by being allowed to participate in decisions. Parents can give their children good values by explaining right and wrong; making clear rules; not permitting children to "hang out" with children who may be a bad influence; and by setting a good example. Learning can be encouraged at home through making sure schoolwork comes before television; complimenting children when they do well on their schoolwork; visiting places such as museums with the children; offering assistance with schoolwork; and talking to children about the importance of education. (ABL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED315695

CG022274

How to engage the parents of your students at risk

by
Spencer Barnard
Educational Consultant

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. N. Graves

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

HOW TO ENGAGE THE PARENTS OF YOUR STUDENTS AT RISK

Spencer Barnard,

Consultant on the Teaching
of Children at Risk

WINNERSCORP
"We're Saving Futures"

P.O. Box 2454, Kankakee, IL 60901 (815) 9379460

CONTENTS

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT.....1
FOUR KEY PRACTICES FOR PARENTS.... 4
Spend Time With Your Children.....4
Read To Your Children.....5
Discipline Your Children.....6
Expect Your Children To Succeed.....7
HOW TO ENGAGE THE PARENTS.....9
MAKE IT HAPPEN.....13
CHECKLISTS FOR THE PARENTS
OF YOUR STUDENTS AT RISK.....15

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Getting parents to care about their children's education is vital to your success as an educator. Few teachers or principals would disagree that parental involvement is the key to a a child's academic success. In a recent Metropolitan Life Insurance Company poll of 3,000 teachers and parents, lack of parental leadership was suggested as the underlying reason for children's failure to learn at school. Another survey of some 2,500 educators in 12 midwestern states, conducted in the spring of 1989 by the Roper Organization, pointed to parental indifference as the main problem facing schools across the nation's midsection. Six of 10 Illinois educators in that poll, for example, agreed that parental neglect, unstable family life, and lack of parental involvement is a major obstacle to the scholastic achievement of their students.

Parents are the most important teachers their children will ever have. As their first teacher, parents have the capacity to either inspire or dampen interest in learning during the children's most formative years. And the parents will continue to influence their children's attitudes toward learning -- for better or worse -- for years to come.

When parents talk with their children at home, and when they help them notice the world around them, the children's cognitive development is enhanced. If parents read to their children, the children come to see reading as a skill worth learning. If the

parents listen to their children, the children begin to think of themselves as important, and positive self-concept has a powerful effect on academic success. If parents praise their children, the children will begin to believe in themselves. Parents either stimulate or repress the scholastic development of their children. Tragically, in more and more school districts across America the latter effect is becoming the norm. The crucially important dimension of parental involvement in the education of our children is being eroded away by growing economic demands upon families, divorce, substance abuse, and single teen parenthood. Sociologists believe, in fact, that the teenage pregnancy crisis is itself rooted in parents having surrendered their teaching authority.

Recent studies of Japanese and American public school students reveal some rather embarrassing deficits in the academic achievement of American students. For example, 90 percent of Japanese students graduate from high school, almost all of them equipped for the world of work, compared to 75 percent of American students, many of whom enter the workforce with questionable skills. Experts who study this phenomenon have learned that standing behind Japanese students are Japanese mothers who are fully engaged in their children's school life, helping them everyday with homework, teaching them good study habits, and otherwise spending a lot of time with their kids. Japanese parents know how important the family is to academic development, and they use this knowledge to lay a solid foundation for their children's formal education. Research shows clearly that family support makes a difference in U.S. students, too. Kids who have support at home show improved self-esteem, stay in school longer, and are less likely to break the law.

Families that contribute significantly to their children's academic development tend to have the following qualities in common:

* Family members have sincere affection for each other and frequently express that affection, both verbally and nonverbally.

* They engage in positive communication, talking honestly with each other and emphasizing one another's strengths rather than their weaknesses.

* They spend a lot of good-quality time together.

* They share appropriate values and have a network of caring friends and relatives in the community.

* They cope successfully with adversity by meeting their "crises" together as a family.

Most educators will recognize the foregoing qualities as those which tend to be lacking in the families of their students at risk.

Because the family is where children live, any negative influences upon the family institution are also negative influences upon the children. The high incidence of broken marriages and today's rapid increase in the number of unwed teenage girls giving birth are two such negative influences. Both have a devastating effect upon the family structure. These two failures within the American culture are destroying the support system of vast numbers of children by weakening parental discipline, decimating extended families, and alienating young parents from the mainstream of our society, including the school. The result is an impaired ability to learn and a shriveled desire to achieve. As an educator, you need to fight to overcome this grotesque obstacle our society has put in the road to your teaching success.

Victory can be achieved, for while our society's value system has eroded, a mother's natural love for her children has not, except, perhaps, in aberrant cases. A mother's natural love is accompanied by a natural desire to see her children succeed. The twin killers of that desire are despair and ignorance. If the parents of your children at risk sense that there is hope, and if they are shown a practical way to help their children become better students, they will involve themselves in the education process.

This book is intended to help you take that first critical step in making it happen, toward installing the parents of your students at risk as partners in the education of their children. In the pages which follow, you will find some recommendations about what to tell the parents of your at-risk students about their importance in the education process, and you will gain some practical suggestions for actually engaging those parents in the academic development of their children.

FOUR KEY PRACTICES FOR PARENTS

Many of the parents of your at-risk students -- perhaps most of them -- simply don't know how important they are to their children's success in school. They may not understand, for example, that something as simple as waking up with their children and fixing them breakfast can improve their kids' concentration in school. Why not tell the parents of your at-risk students how such things will help you to educate their children? If you communicate the following principles to them with some frequency, I believe many will begin to listen, and some will earnestly try to put them into practice. You should be able to see those efforts reflected in the scholastic performance of their children.

1. Spend Time With Your Children

There is no greater influence for good in the lives of children than the love of their parents. Children spell that love, t-i-m-e. Parents need to know that time is the one thing their children need most from them, and they must understand how their time impacts their children's future. Time gives kids assurance of caring that words alone can never provide. Time means opportunities for children to talk to parents about the things that interest them, and for parents to talk to children about ways to

pursue those interests. Time means the chance to laugh together and cry together, to share stories of successes and struggles. With time, children can get the important people in their lives to believe in them, and that's a key step toward their gaining self-confidence. With time, parents can explain things to their children that will help them make sense of their world. They can tell stories about the familiy, good stories about brothers and sisters and grandma and grandpa, stories that can make the children feel a part of something good; stories that show the child how his family relates successfully to the world.

With time, parents can listen to their children. They can hear how they're feeling and offer words of encouragement. With time, parents can touch, and hug and assure. Time together gives children a feeling of security and identity, establishes their sense of belonging. Only time shows children how much their parents care. Only time convinces children of their importance; and that wonderful knowledge is the cornerstone of all of their future successes.

2. Read To Your Children

The most important single thing parents can do to prepare their children for success in school is read to them. If they read to the children, the children will become readers. Reading to young children expands their vocabulary and makes them more capable of recognizing and understanding new words as they begin to learn to read at school. And if children become good readers early, they will be good readers always. Reading to older children encourages an appreciation for the skill of reading as a source of both information and entertainment. And parents should know that when they read themselves, their inquisitive children will become interested in the skill of reading naturally. And if they expose children to books, children will tend to like books. I suggest telling the parents of your at-risk students that the value they place on reading will determine the value reading will have to their children. And, while you're at it, let them know that reading not only has to be valued, it must also be practiced, because, as with most skills, it is practice that leads to polished performance.

3. Discipline Your Children

Parents need to know the importance of responding with control to their children's behavior. It is important that they understand the significance of not belittling their children, or of losing their temper. Research has shown that parents who coerce and threaten are more likely to produce defiance in their children than are parents who explain their reasons for punishment. Children to whom explanations are given appear to perform better in kindergarten and early elementary school.

Parents must discipline their children with strictness, but never with cruelty; with explanation, but never misrepresentation. Justice must always prevail. Discipline must be tough, but it has to be loving. It is this balance of discipline with love that teaches children respect for authority and instills a sense of the need for restraint in their lives.

The parents of your at-risk children should also know that discipline is much more than just punishing their children for inappropriate conduct. Because the purpose of discipline is to instill a sense of self-control in children's lives, it must have a positive side, too. Children should be "caught doing things right", as well as caught doing things wrong. Offering praise for exemplary behavior reinforces that behavior, and thus contributes to the objective of discipline.

Discipline in the home should also include establishing a structure that provides for effective use of children's time. Parents need to guide their children in organizing their lives. For example, when do they study? And where? How much time can they spend watching TV? And what should they watch? At what time must they go to bed? Notice that the idea is to guide them. If children organize their own day, with the help of parents, they will add to their confidence level by sharing in the decision-making process and gain some incentive to try things on their own. Children have to have decision-making experiences if they are to become responsible decision-makers.

Parents should know the importance of assigning regular jobs in the family as a means of developing their children's sense of responsibility. This is yet another dimension of discipline. By

doing tasks which are important to the family, children both learn accountability to others and establish their sense of place.

It is particularly important that the parents of your children at risk know these two principles: 1) Discipline and structure are at the heart of effective parenting, and 2) What parents do will always have a far greater impact on their children than what they say, so it is the parents' lives which provide the model for their children's conduct.

4. Expect Your Children to Succeed

In the Metropolitan Life poll cited earlier, both parents and teachers overwhelmingly asserted their belief that parents fail to motivate their children to want to learn more in school. This is unfortunate because children's natural desire to please their parents provides just the right bridge for parents to communicate good expectations. Other surveys also show that parents believe that they themselves, and not the school, are responsible for developing their children's interests and reading skills, and establishing an eagerness to succeed in school.

It is almost a universal truth that expectations affect reality, and parents should know how important their expectations are to the success of their children in school. Here are some suggestions you can pass along to the parents of your at-risk students to help them establish positive expectations for their children:

* Talk to your children about their successes -- present and future. Be positive. The more positive talk there is in your home, the more your children will believe in themselves.

* Share stories of success that have happened within your family. Talk about your family's triumphs, regardless of how small they might seem, of brothers, sisters, grand-parents, aunts, uncles, anyone with whom the child feels a kinship. Build these little success stories into your conversations at meal times. Hearing about success within their family puts those same kinds of successes within the realm of possiblilty in the minds of the children.

* Believe in yourself. Doing so will inspire self-confidence in

your children. Just as parents are their children's best role models when it comes to self-discipline, they are also their best role models when it comes to self-confidence. If parents exude self-confidence, so will their children.

* Find out what interests your children. Watch carefully to see what they like to do and what they don't like to do. Then encourage them to do the things they like. It is a natural thing that people tend to do well the things they enjoy doing; and when they do them well, they feel successful and their confidence grows.

* When children have a big job to do, help them break that job into a series of smaller steps. This will both give you the chance to work together with your children, and allow them to experience repeated successes. Those successes, even if small, will give your children a sense of accomplishment and will build their confidence.

* Talk to your children's teachers as often as you can to keep track of their progress at school. Doing so will let you know just where to help them, and that will enhance their feeling of success at school.

There are four checklists at the back of this book with steps which parents can take at home to help lay the right foundation for their children's success in school. You might include selected points in letters, phone calls, or personal contacts, or copy the checklists as they are for distribution to the parents of your students at risk.

HOW TO ENGAGE THE PARENTS

Once you've told the parents of your students at risk what they should be doing at home, the next step is to help them to do it. This probably means, among other things, sending home activities with students which parents can use -- and will want to use -- to enhance your teaching efforts. Because no one is better equipped than teachers to suggest ways to complement what is being done in their classroom, the comments here are confined to general recommendations about the homelife areas in which I believe your creative efforts will yield the greatest benefit. Use these ideas as a starting place in thinking about specific ways to engage the parents of your students at risk in the education of their children:

* Children at risk generally need more structure in their lives than they presently have. Provide some ways for their parents to guide them in setting regular times to study, watch TV, and do the other things that normally occupy their time.

* Reading in the home is, of course, a key to the educational success of your students at risk. If you could send just one message to parents, it would have to be to spend at least a little time everyday reading to and with their children. Doing so will help children develop a positive attitude toward reading. Research

shows that people who read early in their lives continue to read throughout their lives. Anything you can do to increase the time spent reading by any member of the family will enhance the learning process for your children at risk.

Consider sending home some high-interest, low-level reading selections for parents to share with their children; some short mysteries perhaps, and maybe some brief bio-graphies (be sure the subjects are good role models for the kids). You can also provide some activities that require the use of the newspaper, magazines and other print media.

The object of exposing children to reading materials, especially younger children, isn't to produce super readers, it is to build their vocabulary so that they will enjoy the reading experience. With this in mind, think about sending along with your reading selections some graded vocabulary exercises that parents can use to "learn along" with their kids.

* Because there is a natural association between reading and writing, the reading process can be enhanced through writing activities in the home. You might offer suggestions for keeping a journal or develop guidelines for a writing contest (remember to include poetry), with the writing to be done at home and the judging conducted at school by the teachers. Writing, particularly about family matters, has the added benefit of drawing the family closer together.

* Most parents of children at risk probably know few principles of good child development. Share with them a few basic facts that might help them to catch major developmental problems in their children early, while they are relatively easy to remedy.

* Many parents of at-risk students feel separated from the mainstream of our society, thus isolated from your school. It is probable that they have failed at school themselves and may have a negative attitude toward the entire education enterprise. Anything you can do to heal the attitudes of these parents and make them feel a part of your school's mission will represent a quantum leap forward for their children.

* Because many of the parents of your at-risk students are so young, they may be more interested in having fun themselves than

in helping their children succeed in school. Capitalize by providing some parent and child take-home activities with the "fun" incentive built in, simple learning games, crafts, etc. Just make sure the activities are constructive, as well as entertaining.

* Parents of children at risk tend to acknowledge the negative behavior of their children more readily than the positive, with the obvious result that the negative behavior is reinforced. Give parents a reason to watch for good behavior and suggest various means of rewarding positive conduct when they see it.

* Typically, there are many demands and few rewards in the lives of the parents of at-risk children. Under these circumstances, anyone with a sincere good word for them should get a listening ear. When these parents complete a task you've recommended, be sure to acknowledge their performance with a note of appreciation, perhaps with a "Certificate of Merit." Doing so will show them that you value their role as partners in their children's education. This pleasant interaction is a means of hammering more planks into the relational bridge under construction between your school and the parents of your students at risk. Recognition is especially important for your "problem parents," those who have apathetic or negative feelings about school. Acknowledging the small successes of such parents will produce direct benefits in the academic lives of your students at risk.

* Children at risk are likely to have an underdeveloped sense of responsibliity. Encourage your students to look for ways to help with little jobs needing to be done around their homes. Doing things they believe are important to others will help them feel more responsible.

Children's sense of responsibility also grows when they make decisions for themselves. You might devise some realistic "situations" for discussion in the home in which children must consider pros and cons, then process that information in order to make a decision. For example, "Do I watch my favorite TV show tonight, or do I go with mom to visit my grandma?" As children make decisions for themselves based on reason, their sense of responsibility develops and they also feel more enhanced as people.

Include the importance of homework among your ideas for improving children's sense of responsibility. Experts agree that all students must be taught that homework is their personal responsibility. Look for ways to help parents affirm this idea to their children, perhaps by "empowering" them to insist that children adhere to study times and make sure the work assigned them has been completed. Gradually, under persistence, children begin to internalize the idea that their school success is up to them. When that happens, they will have begun to achieve a new level of personal responsibility.

* One common characteristic of the successful, productive life is the ability to set goals, then to move in the direction of those goals. This trait, however, is not usually present in the lives of your students at risk, nor in their parents' lives. You can begin to fill this void by giving parents some specific ideas for helping their children to set some achieveable goals for themselves, including, but not limited to, learning goals. When personal goals are set and attained repeatedly, these positive experiences set up a success pattern which can spark children's confidence in themselves.

* Everything suggested thus far has been directed at engaging the parents of your at-risk students in the place where they live. But at some point, in order to "legalize" their partnership in the education of their children, you have to draw them to your turf. The parent-teacher conference is probably the best place to begin. Prepare them early and often for that event. Give them non-threatening information about the importance of the conference and issue repeated friendly invitations to them to participate. If you are successful in implementing any of the above suggestions, they should have a stronger reason than ever to come.

MAKE IT HAPPEN

As it stands today, most children at risk are ill-prepared to enter school and, once they do come, they have many more factors working against their success than for it. Most of those negative factors are in the home. It is a simple fact of life that parents are their children's most influential teachers, and what they "teach" determines to a very great extent what their children will become. Students at risk who have beat the odds against them by working their way into productive lives have likely had at least one parent who paid the price at home to enrich what was being done for their children at school. Such efforts are exceptional today, but that doesn't make them any less crucial to the futures of our children at risk, which means that if educators are going to improve the academic performance of their students at risk, they must begin to impart some of their knowledge and experience to the parents of those youngsters.

The "curriculum of the home," as someone has called it, needs to be an extension of the curriculum of the school. The parents of your students at risk should be taught how to play their vital role

in the academic development of their children. This means that educators aren't just teaching children anymore, they're teaching adults as well. You should try to improve the parents' attitude toward the school just as you are trying to improve their children's attitude toward learning. You should make an effort to increase your interaction with parents just as you are trying to increase your interaction with your students in the classroom. You should try to teach parents to pay more attention to the learning needs of their children at home just as you are trying to do for them at school. You need to try to help the parents to grow while you are helping their children to grow. Think about making your school the catalyst for change in the process of educating children at risk.

The time has come to roll up our sleeves and go to work to engage the parents of our students at risk. Assert to your parents your conviction that what happens in the home is vitally important to what happens to their children at school. You won't be disappointed. Your efforts will pay off in a higher level of self-esteem for your children at risk, improvement in their system of values and sense of responsibility, and a growing desire to be a life-long learner. These are the very qualities that will lead your students at risk out of the confusion and despair in which so many now exist and set them on the road toward rewarding, productive lives.

CHECKLISTS FOR THE PARENTS OF YOUR STUDENTS AT RISK

The steps parents can take at home to lay the right foundation for their children's success in school are summarized in the following four checklists. In traditional families, these practices tend to be natural. But traditional families are being supplanted rapidly by non-traditional families, which are often headed by young mothers with insufficient experience to make responsible decisions, and which are lacking the regular presence of an adult male, whose disciplinary strength serves as an "anchor" for children. In contemporary family environments, the practices which build strong children tend not to take place automatically. The kind of homelife in which many of our children live today is thus a risk factor in their academic futures. The parents in

non-traditional families need to be indoctrinated in the practices which will produce in their children the values, interests, and attitudes that will help them succeed in school. It is not safe to assume that this teaching will be done by someone else. The fact is, if you don't do it, it probably won't be done, with the tragic result that the academic futures of many of your students will be lost. The checklists which follow are intended to help you impart to the parents of your students at risk a few things they can do -- indeed must do-- in their homes to build confidence, establish appropriate values, and encourage their children to learn.

Use items from the checklists in personal notes, newsletters, phone calls, or conferences, or copy them as they are for distribution to the parents of your students at risk. The checklists are a good way for you to tell these parents how important they are in the education process and will let you show them where they can begin to help you build a decent future for their children.

BUILD YOUR CHILDREN'S CONFIDENCE

✓ Learn your children's strengths. Encourage them to do the kinds of activities that develop those strengths.

✓ Compliment your children each time you see something positive. Give them a "good word" for any improvement in their conduct or work. Don't qualify or "water down" your words of encouragement by saying things like, "that was good, but...."

✓ Let your children know that you believe in them, that you trust their judgement. This will help them to believe in themselves.

✓ Set goals for your children which they can attain. Achieving goals helps them to see that they can succeed. Make sure the goals you set are reasonable, because unreasonable goals can frustrate children and cause them to give up.

✓ Be patient with your children. Don't lose your temper when they make mistakes. Mistakes are a necessary part of learning. And it is important that they know they don't have to be "perfect" to be accepted by you.

✓ Let your children learn things on their own. Don't always impose your solutions on their problems. If they really get stuck, discuss with them ways you might work together to solve their problem.

✓ Never ridicule your children or give them labels, such as "dummy" or "troublemaker." Children tend to live up to the "titles" you give them.

✓ Look for ways to make your children feel that they are important to your family. One means to do this is to take pictures of them, put the pictures in frames, and place them around the house, where they can be easily seen. Another way is to acknowledge their birthdays by inviting their friends (and some of your friends,too) to come over for a birthday celebration.

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN GOOD DISCIPLINE

✓ Give your children responsibilities in your home, jobs that have to be done at certain times.

✓ Help your children set regular times to do homework, watch TV, eat, perform household duties, play, and sleep.

✓ When your children misbehave, they may be doing so to either get your attention or "get back at you" for some injustice they think you have done to them. Think before you respond to their misbehavior. Ask them for an explanation for their behavior before you give punishment.

✓ Children who frequently misbehave are probably discouraged about something. Give such children lots of encouragement. This may be hard to do, but it is important because it will help them feel better about their lives.

✓ Don't protect your children from the consequences of their behavior. This will prevent them from learning from their mistakes, which is an important part of growing up.

✓ Let your children participate in making decisions in your home. Doing so will help them feel that they have some control over what happens to them.

✓ Set firm rules for your children and tell them your reasons for the rules. Demand that they follow your rules. If they don't, punish them quickly, but without losing your temper. Always explain to them your reasons for the punishment.

GIVE YOUR CHILDREN GOOD VALUES

Explain to your children what is right and what is wrong. Doing so will help them make personal decisions based on facts instead of on what their friends might want them to do.

Lay down clear rules in your home so that your children will understand exactly what you expect of them. It is very important that they know what kind of behavior is and is not permitted.

Help your children get involved in healthy activities outside your home, such as school programs, hobbies, and worthwhile community projects. This will occupy some of their free time constructively.

Do not permit your children to "hang out" with youngsters you believe may be a poor influence in their lives.

If you see a problem in your children's conduct that you don't think you can handle yourself, seek advice right away about what to do. Your school can recommend a qualified person to help you.

Be a good example for your children. Live the way you hope they will live when they grow up. If your conduct and attitude are good, there is a fine chance that theirs' will be also.

ENCOURAGE LEARNING IN YOUR HOME

✓ Make sure schoolwork comes before TV and before household

✓ duties.

✓ Compliment your children when they do their schoolwork well.

✓ Provide a special place to do homework and limit distractions as much as possible. Make sure the children have all the materials they need to complete their work.

✓ Talk about reading often in your home. Read to your children at least a few minutes everyday.

✓ Make plans for your children to pay occasional visits to the library and other "learning places," such as museums and arts and crafts fairs.

✓ Encourage your children to use good grammar in your home and teach them the meanings of words which may be new to them.

✓ Talk to your children's teachers about their progress in school. Find out what they are working on and how you can help them at home.

✓ Expect your children to do their schoolwork well and expect them to make good grades.

✓ Offer assistance when your children seem to be struggling with their schoolwork. Make a point of being patient as you are helping them.

✓ Talk to your children often about how important education is to their future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As a parent, educator, and businessman, Spencer Barnard is uniquely qualified to assist schools in removing the obstacles that litter the academic road of their students at risk. He is a lifelong educator with experience as an elementary teacher, school administrator, and as C.E.O. of Imperial International Learning Corporation, an educational audio-visual publishing company. For the past five years, Mr. Barnard has been exploring the societal and environmental circumstances which are jeopardizing the futures of so many of our nation's young people. He now invests his knowledge and experience in consulting with educators and business executives on saving the futures of our children at risk. For information about his consulting services, contact:

Barnard Consultants

P.O. Box 2474

Kankakee, IL 60901

(815) 937-9460